

CLAIMS

1. A vacuum cleaner including a suction unit (1) and a flexible hose assembly (2) connected therewith, characterised in that the hose assembly (2) includes at least two flexible sections one of which (25) has a smaller external diameter than the other (20) and is slidable within the other, and that the two sections are arranged to seal with one another at least when the two sections are extended relative to one another.
2. A vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1, characterised in that the flexible sections (20 and 25) are corrugated.
3. A vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the smaller diameter section (25) is stretchable from a natural short length to a longer length by applying an axial force.
4. A vacuum cleaner according to Claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the smaller diameter section (25) is retractable from a natural extended length to a shorter length.
5. A vacuum cleaner according to Claim 4, characterised in that the smaller diameter section (25) is retractable by suction applied by the suction unit (1) when the end (32) of the hose assembly (2) is occluded.
6. A vacuum cleaner according to any one of Claims 3 to 5, characterised in that the shorter length of the smaller diameter section (25) is substantially equal to the length of the larger diameter section (20).
7. A vacuum cleaner according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the two sections (20 and 25) of the hose assembly (2) are provided with cooperating couplings (24 and 33) that can be engaged with one another to retain the two sections in a compact configuration one within the other for storage.

8. A vacuum cleaner according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the larger diameter section (20) of the hose assembly (2) is stretchable from a natural short length to a longer length by applying an axial force.
9. A hose assembly (2) for a vacuum cleaner, characterised in that the hose assembly (2) includes inner and outer corrugated, flexible sections (25 and 20), that the inner section (25) has a first end (28) slidably retained within the outer section (20), that the hose assembly (2) has a short configuration where the major part of the length of the inner section (25) extends within the outer section (20) and the first end (28) of the inner section (25) is located adjacent the first end (21) of the outer section (20), and that the hose assembly (2) has a longer configuration where the inner section (25) is extended beyond a second end (24) of the outer section (20) and the first end (28) of the inner section (25) is located adjacent the second end (24) of the outer section (20) and in which a seal (29, 30) is provided between the two sections (20 and 25).
10. A hose assembly according to Claim 9, characterised in that the inner section (25) is extensible from a shorter length substantially equal to the length of the outer section (20) to a longer length greater than that of the outer section.